

Approved For Release 2003/05/05 : CIA-RDP84-00780R004000060039-2

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16 February 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Training

SUBJECT : Forum Panel on "The Agency and American Youth"

25X1 1. [redacted] spoke for no more than twenty minutes, then  
25X1 opened up the session to questions from the audience. The two key  
25X1 questions were asked by [redacted] of ONE and [redacted] of OCI respect-  
25X1 ively. They were not so much questions as critical comments challenging  
25X1 the accuracy of what had been said [redacted] or the veracity of [redacted]  
25X1 [redacted].

25X1 2. [redacted] had stated that, as far as recruitment was concerned,  
25X1 the Agency image was good. Many qualified persons were applying. [redacted]  
25X1 said that [redacted] was not telling the truth and that the Agency's image  
25X1 was bad among the students he knew at the better universities. [redacted] 25X1 conceded that we had fewer applicants from the famous Eastern universities  
than in the past, but reiterated that the overall picture was good.

25X1 3. [redacted] had mentioned the high professional retention rate. [redacted]  
25X1 challenged the seeming rosiness of this picture, stating that the best young  
25X1 people were leaving. [redacted] replied that there was no evidence to support  
such a claim, but he conceded that whereas 3 out of 4 who left in the past  
indicated they were doing so because of better job offers on the outside,  
now 3 out of 4 cite dissatisfaction with their Agency jobs as the main cause.

25X1 4. Another asked why we kept recruiting people in the light of supposed  
personnel cuts. [redacted] cited the minimum number we must recruit every  
year to replace those who leave, retire, or die -- even allowing for cuts  
in the T/O.

25X1 5. One asked why there was so much subjectivity in the fitness reports.  
[redacted] replied that we were aware of this and frequently made modifications  
with a view to strengthening them.

6. Comment:

25X1 There is a certain ambiguity in the title which was reflected in  
the questions. Not everyone conceived the scope of the panel in the same  
way, although [redacted] remarks made it clear that he was focusing on the  
recruitment and processing of young people who have recently entered CIA.

25X1

Thus, one questioner [redacted] was concerned about the image of CIA among the "American youth" that chooses not to join CIA -- presumably because of that image. [redacted] statistics referred to the largely self-selected group that does join CIA. Other questioners conceived of the panel as one on "The Agency (read 'the Agency's top management') and American Youth" (read 'CIA youth'). For them it was an opportunity to communicate their concerns to the upper echelons. It seems to me that one should welcome this, making due allowances for a certain amount of brashness. As for [redacted] he did very well. He did not get angry or cut down any one. He took all the questions seriously, and answered them honestly, sticking to the studies and statistics available. All this took place in an educational atmosphere of open discussion and academic freedom. It was the right time, the right place, and the right way for a free people to act.

25X1

25X1

[redacted]  
25X1